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UCC Wellness Ministries Newsletter

March-April, Volume 7 Issue 2

REFLECTION

Prayers for the People of Ukraine:

Officers of the United Church of Christ
National Council of Churches

COVID 19 Update

The Department of Homeland Security, Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships hosted a webinar in May 2021 to support faith-based and community-based organizations, emergency managers and first responders who are responding to COVID-19 and/or have personally experienced the traumatic impact of COVID-19. This online seminar addressed the stress and the social and emotional impacts associated with COVID-19 by learning from subject

matter experts on mental health who provided perspectives that include communities of color and various faith traditions. The intent for this webinar was to present strategies and/or resources that were applicable to all who viewed the webinar. Coping During COVID: Strategies on Managing Stress is available for listening.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought overwhelming grief to many families. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is dedicated to helping ease some of the financial stress and burden caused by the virus. Under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, FEMA is providing financial assistance for COVID-19 -related funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020. For more information about this assistance, visit COVID-19 Funeral Assistance | FEMA.gov. Get answers to frequently asked questions about the application process on FEMA's Funeral Assistance FAQ page. Watch the video, Providing Financial Assistance for COVID-19-related Funeral Expenses, or share this flyer.

Change in Mask Guidelines:

The CDC changed its guidelines for masking on February 24th because easy access to vaccines and testing, better treatments for COVID-19, and widespread immunity have "moved the pandemic to a new phase," the agency said in a news release. The new guidelines break COVID-19 risk levels into categories of high, medium, and low by states' counties. Indoor masking is recommended only in counties at the high risk level. You can check COVID-19 Community Level to know your county's risk level.

The CDC also stated "Health officials and individuals should consider current information about COVID-19 hospitalizations in the community, as well as the potential for strain on the local health system and COVID-19 cases in the community, when making decisions about community prevention strategies and individual behaviors. Communities and individuals should also make decisions based on whether they are at high risk for severe disease and take into account inequities in access to prevention strategies."

HEALTH EDUCATIONAL TOPICS:

MARCH:

Women's History Month

The theme of Women's History Month 2022 is "Providing Healing, Promoting Hope." It is a tribute to "the ceaseless work of caregivers and frontline workers during this ongoing pandemic and also a recognition of the thousands of ways that women of all cultures have provided both healing and hope throughout history."

You can view documentaries on women on history vault. You can also read a timeline of women's milestones.

International Women's Day, a global celebration of the economic, political and social achievements of women, took place for the first time on March 8, 1911. Many countries around the world celebrate the holiday with demonstrations, educational initiatives and customs such as presenting women with gifts and flowers.

Recognition for Faith Community Nurses:

American Nurses Credentialing Center Certified Nurses Day - March 19th.

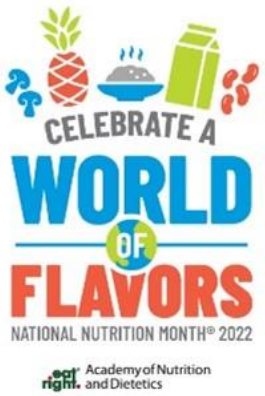
A message to Clergy: If your congregation has a nurse that has achieved certification in faith community nursing, take this opportunity to recognize the nurse's achievement, expertise and clinical judgement.

A message to my colleagues who are certified faith community nurses, I send congratulations for reaching this recognition and gratitude for your excellence shared through caring ministry to those in your communities.

Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month:

The Colorectal Cancer Alliance offers two brochures with information on awareness and prevention, and patient support and community action. The first 100 copies are free.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) describes colorectal cancer screening test options. An important message that "age 45 is the new 50" details why it is important to start screenings at age 45. A new video, *The Bums and the Bees*, promotes the importance of getting regular, on-time screenings for colorectal cancer.



National Nutrition Month:

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Eat Right program has selected Celebrate a World of Flavors as the theme for this year's nutrition month. A toolkit offers tip sheets and handouts, games and activities, PowerPoint presentations and more. Select content is available in seven languages, including English, Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese.

National Kidney Month:

The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases states that "37 million people in the United States are estimated to have chronic kidney disease (CKD). As many as 9 in 10 people are not aware that they have CKD." The focus this year is on building paths to better kidney care. A toolkit includes a flyer, social media content, and a You Tube video.

The National Kidney Foundation section on Kidney Basics has information on kidney health, risk factors, health testing, and diet and nutrition.

APRIL:

National Minority Health Month:

The National Institute of Health designates April as a time to "raise awareness about health disparities that continue to affect racial and ethnic minority populations and encourage action through health education, early detection, and control of disease complications." The theme for 2022 is Give Your Community a Boost! *In response to the* COVID-19 pandemic, vaccination, including a booster, is one of the strongest tools available to end the COVID-19 pandemic. The

CDC discusses specific information about social determinants of health and how underlying health and social inequities that disproportionately affected communities of color put many racial and ethnic minority groups at increased risk of getting sick, having more severe illness, and dying from COVID-19.

World Immunization Week:

World Immunization Week is celebrated the last week in April (this year April 24-30, 2022). The theme of the World Health Organization is Long Life for All in pursuit of a long life well lived. The goal is for more people and their communities to be protected from vaccine-preventable diseases. In this time of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of preventive vaccination is a key emphasis to educational messaging and public health initiatives. A poignant message on the World Health Organization's webpage closes with these words about vaccines:

But their worth isn't just measured
in doses given.
It's in minutes given back.
And lives prolonged.
Vaccines provide opportunity and hope
for all of us to enjoy a more fulfilling life.
And that's something we should all
be fighting for.
Vaccines, in the pursuit of a long life well lived.
Long Life for All.

The current COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on preventive immunization campaigns related to other diseases. The CDC noted that as of April 2021 almost 70 preventive immunization campaigns in over 60 countries were postponed due to COVID-19, and routine immunization coverage was down globally, including in the United States. The CDC provides information on the 2022 immunization schedules for children (ages birth to 18 years of age) and adults (19 and older). Another link has information on COVID-19 vaccine including frequently asked questions and information to bust myths.

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Health Observances Calendar for 2022: Working for a Healthier Tennessee has developed a 2022 National Holiday & Health Observance Calendar. You can look ahead to find educational resources for future months.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES:

National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention: Webinar March 22

This online seminar is full however you can watch the live stream on their YouTube channel. You can register and then you will be directed on how to view the live stream.

New Date! Faith and Food: Stewarding Creation for Healthier Communities

This free, online workshop originally scheduled for February 17th is **now rescheduled to March 24th.** It is being hosted by the Southern New England Conference's (SNEUCC) Health and Wellness Ministry and the Environmental Ministries Team to help congregations participate in National Nutrition Month during March. The workshop will explore how faith

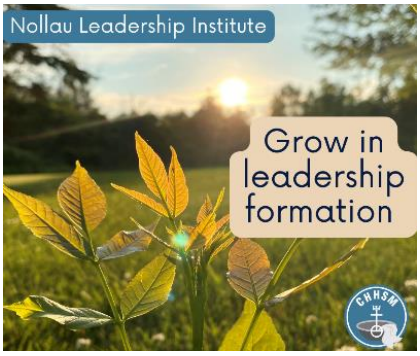
The Westberg Institute will be offered March 28-30, 2022, as a virtual conference.

The Long Haul 2022 Lenten Devotional is now available for purchase as a printed copy (or multiple copies) through the Pilgrim Press. A PDF version is also available. You can purchase one PDF per reader ($3.00 each). The PDF will be emailed to you as a download. Once you place your order, you will receive a link via email to download the PDF.

Cookbook suggestion: During these times of rising food prices maintaining a good nutritional state becomes a concern. *Good Enough: A cookbook embracing the Joys of Imperfection & Practicing Self-Care in the Kitchen* provides information and recipes that enable you to eat well on $4/day. The author,

informs our relationship with food as well as our relationship to others and to Creation, and is offered as part of the SNEUCC Health and Wellness Quarterly Webinar series. **Registration is Free. If you registered previously, you do not need to do so again. The group will contact you.**

Leanne Brown, is making the cookbook available free as an Adobe pdf file. The author allows you to freely distribute this book electronically. To download a free PDF copy or buy a print copy, visit the author's website.



Nollau Leadership Institute is Open for the 2022-23 Class

The Nollau Leadership Institute is The Council for Health and Human Services Ministries (CHHSM) signature program with more than 250 attendees in its 20+ years. Enrollment is now open. Click here to apply.

Schedule:
1st Retreat: June 27-July 1, 2022
2nd Retreat: Oct. 24-28, 2022
Location Information:
Cedar Valley Retreat Center
5349 County Rd. D, West Bend, WI

Annual Gathering: March 6-9, 2023
Location and venue to be announced

This year's program will also have the benefit of implementing recommendations from the Race, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (RDEI) Audit CHHSM completed as part of its commitment to anti-racism. Leadership will be examined, and practiced, through the lenses of anti-oppression, social justice, and a deep sense of self and others. Learn more about the curriculum here.

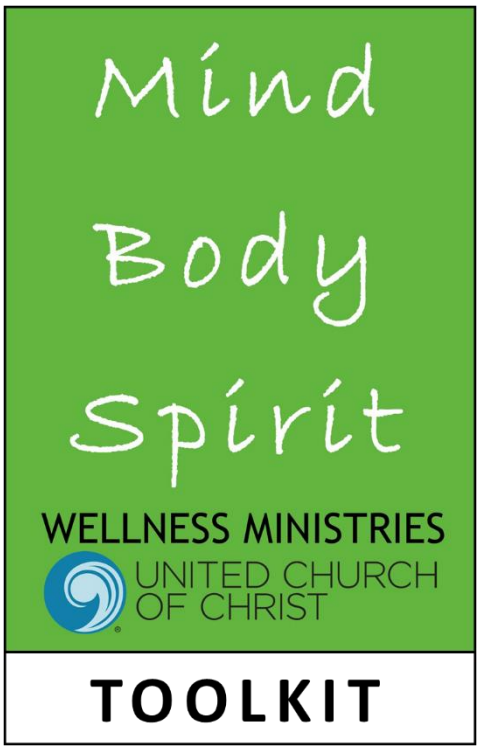
WELLNESS MINISTRIES UPDATE:

The Wellness Ministries Toolkit is not a book. Instead, when completed, it will be an on-line informational document with embedded hyperlinks that take you to resources.

Section 1 – Envisioning Wellness Ministries explains the what, why, who, and where of wellness ministries. Some are led by lay leaders, and some by faith community nurses.

Section 2 – Establishing and Growing Wellness Ministries
provides the resources needed to move from an idea to a sustainable ministry based on the resources the needs of a congregation and the community it serves.

Section 3 – Wellness Ministries of Care provides exemplars and resources shared by others who provide Wellness Ministries programs.



Now we invite your participation!
Find out more about how easily you may contribute to Section 3.

For more information contact Peggy Matteson or wellnessministries@ucc.org.

Our ministries benefit when ideas are shared. This Toolkit is built upon the shared work of past contributors to the U.C.C. *Called to Care: A Notebook for Lay Caregivers* and the U.C.C. *Faith Community Nurse Manual*.

KEEP CONNECTED:

Visit our Facebook and LinkedIn pages: Post comments or share information about your health ministries; join in conversations.

An invitation from the Editor, Alyson Breisch:

- Do you have something you want to share with colleagues?
- Do you have an innovative way you've continued to provide wellness ministries during this past year?

Let us hear about it – you could be featured in an upcoming issue of the newsletter.

Contact us, wellnessministries@ucc.org

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